



# County of San Diego

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**LUKE BERGMANN, Ph.D.**  
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September 29, 2021

TO: Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB)

FROM: LUKE BERGMANN, Ph.D., Director, Behavioral Health Services

## **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES DIRECTOR'S REPORT – OCTOBER 2021**

### **ACTION ITEM(S): VOTE TO APPROVE AND PUBLISH BHAB 2020 ANNUAL REPORT**

The BHAB Annual Report is a requirement of local behavioral health boards/commissions, per State statute. The report is intended to convey information on the work of local behavioral health boards, provide comparisons between each California county, and share best practices. Reports are publicly available and maintained online by the California Association of Local Behavioral Health Boards and Commissions.

On September 22, 2021 BHAB received a draft of the 2020 Annual Report, as compiled by BHS staff with input from the BHAB Chair. Feedback was solicited to be incorporated in the final report. The 2020 BHAB Annual Report is provided in the October BHAB Meeting Packets for approval by vote of the full BHAB.

**It is, THEREFORE, staff's recommendation that your Board vote to approve the publication of the BHAB 2020 Annual Report.**

### **ACTION ITEM(S): BHAB REVISED ORDINANCE AND BYLAWS**

The San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) established the Behavioral Health Advisory Board (BHAB) in 2014, by merging the County of San Diego (County) Alcohol and Drug Advisory Board with the County Mental Health Board. At that time, bylaws were adopted to govern their internal operations in accordance with Board Policy A-74, Citizen Participation in County Boards, Commissions and Committees, which oversees special citizen boards that advise the Board and County staff on issues of policy and serve as links to the community.

This action seeks Board approval to amend the BHAB ordinance and bylaws to align with language in Assembly Bill (AB) 1352, which further defined the roles of County mental health boards in 2019.

The amended ordinance and bylaws, as detailed in Attachments A & A-1 and B & B-1 propose changes to:

- Ensure efficient BHAB operations by clarifying ambiguous language relating to terms of members, in particular to those serving on the BHAB Executive Committee;
- Align with changes to membership criteria and composition requirements for BHAB, pursuant to AB 1352; and
- Conform with additional requirements in alignment with current California Welfare and Institutions Code, as modified by AB 1352.

If approved, this action would approve the amended BHAB ordinance and bylaws and would support the countywide *Live Well San Diego* vision by enhancing community involvement in the planning and provision of behavioral health services, supporting a region that is healthy, safe, and thriving.

**It is, THEREFORE, staff's recommendation that your Board vote to support the authorizations and approvals needed to advance the recommendation in this Board Letter.**

## **LIVE WELL SAN DIEGO UPDATES / SPECIAL EVENTS**

### **Upcoming Events**

#### **Virtual Live Well Advance- Recover, Renew, and Reconnect, November 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>**

Save the date for the 2021 virtual *Live Well* Advance Conference and Schools Summit to connect with community leaders and organizations working to advance a shared vision of a healthy, safe and thriving San Diego region. For more information and to register, visit [www.livewellsd.org/content/livewell/home/news-events/advance.html](http://www.livewellsd.org/content/livewell/home/news-events/advance.html)

#### **Check Your Mood Day, Thursday, October 7, 2021**

The annual Check Your Mood Day observance is on October 7, 2021. The campaign is a collaboration between Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Prevention and Community Engagement Unit and the Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) regional Community Health Promotion Specialists from the newly established Homelessness and Equitable Communities Department. The 2021 Check Your Mood campaign will be conducted virtually through the *Live Well San Diego's* Check Your Mood webpage and through email promotion. The campaign is being promoted to HHSA regional partner networks and the COVID-19 sectors. This year's campaign includes an introductory video, self-help TikTok video, social media toolkit, and radio spot advertisements. The campaign is also being promoted on the It's Up2Us website and social media platform.

### **Event Recaps**

#### **Recovery Happens, Saturday, September 18, 2021**

On Saturday, September 18, 2021, BHS hosted the annual Recovery Happens event. This virtual event was free, open to the public and featured music, inspirational stories, and interaction with event hosts, Scott Silverman, Steve Sapp and celebrity host, Laura Cain from Star radio. Chair Fletcher recorded a special message that was shared at the event along with a virtual presentation of a proclamation honoring National Recovery Month to Marisa Varond, President of the Alcohol and Drug Service Providers Association (ADSPA).

In honor of National Recovery Month, BHS also created a webpage with information and a resource fair which included educational information, employment support, Veteran's services, financial and legal services, prevention and treatment information, community resources and more. The webpage and resource fair were available the entire month of September.

### **Prescription Drug Abuse Task Force Report Card and Press Conference, Tuesday, September 21, 2021**

The Prescription Drug Abuse Task Force (PDATF) is a Countywide initiative comprised of key stakeholders, community members, and local experts working together to decrease the harms associated with the misuse of prescription drugs in San Diego County. Their objectives are to: (1) decrease prescription drug abuse and access to prescription drugs for non-medical use by promoting safe storage, safe disposal, and safe prescribing practices; and (2) to increase engagement among individuals in need of treatment.

On September 21, 2021, PDATF released their 2020 annual report card for San Diego County. The report card provides concrete data on the scale of the prescription drug abuse problem and identifies trends over time. Among other data, the 2020 report shows 576 total unintentional prescription-caused deaths in San Diego County, a 300% increase in fentanyl-caused deaths between 2016 and 2020, and a total of 26,594 pounds of safely disposed medications. Current and past reports are available for download at [www.ccrconsulting.org/pdatf-report-cards](http://www.ccrconsulting.org/pdatf-report-cards).

### **UPDATE FROM THE ADULT AND OLDER ADULT (AOA) SYSTEM OF CARE**

#### **Supportive Housing Champion Recognition for Dr. Piedad Garcia**

On September 28, 2021, Dr. Piedad Garcia, BHS Deputy Director was recognized by the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) for her work in the field of supportive housing and received the Supportive Housing Champion award. The award was presented at the CSH Supportive Housing Symposium, which in honor of CSH's 30th anniversary recognized housing champions and innovations from across the country. Dr. Garcia was recognized for her work as the BHS housing lead, serving as a tireless champion for those living with behavioral health conditions who are experiencing homelessness. Among the accomplishments noted in Dr. Garcia's nomination were the following:

- Employing innovative thinking to identify and eliminate complex barriers often faced by the aforementioned population on their road to housing and recovery.
- Forging relationships with local public housing authorities to access over 1,000 vouchers for BHS clients.
- Working with Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) development partners on the creation of 21 operational housing developments with units serving persons with serious mental illness, with two more properties currently leasing up and 11 in the development pipeline.
- Creating Full-Service Partnership (FSP) Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) programs with dedicated housing staff and embedded housing funds to offer an array of short-term, transitional, and permanent supportive housing.

Dr. Garcia's acknowledgment that housing is behavioral healthcare, and her focus on client-centered, trauma-informed supportive housing programs that emphasize client choice and dignity have resulted in programs that have transformed the lives of tens of thousands of San Diegans. BHS congratulations Dr. Garcia on this honor.

## **Advancing the Behavioral Health Continuum of Care Through Regional Collaboration and Innovation**

### **Expansion of Regional Crisis Stabilization Units (CSU's)**

#### **Paradise Valley**

On August 4, 2020, the Board approved executing a contract with Paradise Valley to provide specialized services for crisis stabilization. The Bayview Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) opened on April 1, 2021 and is adjacent to the Bay View Hospital serving the South region. This site accommodates 12 recliners and provides 24-hour crisis stabilization. Services include psychiatric assessments, monitoring, medications, peer support, case management and care coordination. This service is designed to prevent clients from being admitted to a more intensive inpatient setting.

#### **North Coastal Live Well Health Center**

The North Coastal Live Well Health Center CSU, located in the North Coastal Live Well Health Center in Oceanside, is a 12-recliner outpatient program operating 24-hours per day, to provide community-based, crisis stabilization services in a comfortable, welcoming environment. The procurement for these services has been completed and the contract awardee is Exodus Recovery, Inc. Start-up activities are in process, and the program is expected to be operational in late fall.

#### **Vista Crisis Stabilization Unit**

The Vista CSU is a transformation of the Vista Walk-in Assessment Center and will provide the same services as the North Coastal Live Well Health Center CSU, 12 recliners, 24-hours per day, and is operated by Exodus Recovery Inc. The facility is currently undergoing tenant improvements and is scheduled to be operational by October 1, 2021. A ribbon cutting media event is scheduled for September 30 with remarks from Chair Fletcher, Supervisor Desmond, District Attorney Summer Stephan, Undersheriff Kelly Martinez, HHSA Director Nick Macchione, Dr. Luke Bergmann, and Exodus Recovery President/CEO Luana Murphy.

#### **North Coastal Pilot Mobile Crisis Response Team**

On January 11, 2021, the North Coastal Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) pilot program had their soft launch. The MCRT is a service providing field-based non-law enforcement, crisis intervention services. With services dispatched by the Access and Crisis Line, teams consisting of a clinician and a peer respond to individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis, in the field, with the goal of de-escalating the crisis and diverting the client from higher and more costly levels of care. As of September 12, 2021, the North Coastal MCRT has provided services to 98 clients, with all but one successfully diverted from a higher level of care.

#### **Regional Mobile Crisis Response Team**

On June 1, 2021, the Regional MCRT contract was awarded to Telecare Corporation. The Regional MCRT provides the same services as the North Coastal MCRT and covers the remaining five HHSA regions. The Regional MCRT began accepting referrals for the South Bay community on August 18, 2021.

#### **County Continuous Care Coordination (4C)**

Blue Shield California (BSC) and the County of San Diego, Behavioral Health Services (BHS) entered into an agreement to launch a new longitudinal care coordination service for clients across health plans. Blue Shield California has underwritten this work with a \$1 million investment launching the program. The County-operated Continuous Care Coordination program provides enhanced and continuous care coordination for clients ages 18 and over, with serious mental illness (SMI) and co-occurring conditions such as medical, substance use, etc., who may not be connected to behavioral health services and

experience high service utilization. This program has an initial focus on clients who are discharged from designated Behavioral Health Units (BHU), including the San Diego County Psychiatric Hospital (SDCPH). Services include in-person outreach, engagement, linkage, case management, in-person services while at the BHU, continuous care coordination and connection to needed services in coordination with multiple service providers on behalf of the client. In addition to serving high-end system utilizers, the program also serves those who lack care navigation support and may be exhibiting co-occurring conditions along with those clients who may have difficulty accessing appropriate healthcare, no access to stable housing, food insecurity, disparities and inequities or unemployment/no income. This program is designed to complement behavioral health treatment providers and ensure client's connection to these services is maintained.

### **COVID-19 BHS Response**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, BHS partnered with Public Health Services and other HHSA departments to ensure the behavioral health needs of individuals were addressed with those impacted by COVID-19.

### **Public Health Lodging Sites**

Effective April 1, 2020, several contracts with Telecare were amended to deploy staff to the public health lodging sites in partnership with County of San Diego Public Health Services to provide on-site behavioral health services for COVID positive individuals requiring safe isolation. Telecare provides 24/7 support at the public health lodging sites to include crisis intervention, case management, treatment/safety planning, coordination with external providers, and discharge planning for services. As of August 31, 2021, Telecare had provided services to nearly 5,000 guests at the public health lodging site.

### **Housing and Homeless Services**

#### **No Place Like Home**

In June 2021, Nestor Senior Village—which will be located in the Nestor neighborhood of the city of San Diego—was the seventh development countywide to receive a conditional funding and services commitment through the No Place Like Home (NPLH) program. NPLH provides loans to affordable housing developers to create permanent supportive housing units for individuals with an SMI or SED diagnosis who are experiencing homelessness or chronic homeless, or who are at risk of chronic homelessness. Like the Special Needs Housing Program (SNHP), supportive services for these NPLH units will be provided by BHS. Unlike previous MHSA-funded housing programs, NPLH loans are administered locally by County Housing and Community Development Services (HCDS). The third round of NPLH funding is now available. The most recent NPLH Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) was released on October 31, 2019 and is currently open.

#### **Emergency Housing Vouchers**

BHS providers have submitted more than 80 referrals for clients to access Emergency Housing Vouchers through the San Diego Housing Commission. The Emergency Housing Voucher program is a tenant-based voucher program funded through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) that will provide more than 800 vouchers to persons in San Diego County who are experiencing homelessness, at-risk of homelessness, or recently homeless. BHS referring partners included providers from the AOA and Children, Youth, and Families (CYF) systems of care that provide mental health and/or substance use services.

#### **Kearny Vista and Valley Vista: Partnership with San Diego Housing Commission**

BHS partnered with the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) to contract for on-site care coordination and case management services at SDHC housing properties in Kearny Vista and Valley Vista. The two properties have a combined total of 332 units comprised of studios, 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom units. The

program will serve residents living at these properties with the goal of increasing housing stability and retention. Services on-site include outreach and engagement, screening, case management, crisis intervention and care coordination, and linkage to needed behavioral health and other social services. These new BHS contracts will be effective October 1, 2021 with services scheduled to start mid-November 2021.

### **Drug-Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS) Updates**

#### **Residential: Pathfinders of San Diego**

Pathfinders of San Diego is a residential Drug Medi-Cal program which provides treatment to clients with co-occurring mental health conditions. The program has demonstrated excellent care coordination with Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) programs and outpatient bio-psychosocial rehabilitation (BPSR) clinics, ensuring connection to the appropriate services for each client. The program exceeded the outcomes for connection to outpatient services and housing homeless clients at time of discharge. In fiscal year 2020-2021, they connected 87% of all clients to outpatient substance use treatment and housed 93% of homeless clients at time of discharge. The program is actively improving access to similar programs via a website which highlights DMC-ODS principles and provides education on current issues, including the increase in fentanyl use. <https://pathfindersofsandiego.mystagingwebsite.com/about-us/>

#### **Outpatient: Indian Health Council, Inc. (Tribal Federally Qualified Health Center)**

BHS initiated a contract for DMC-ODS services with Indian Health Council on April 15, 2021. This is the first contract between County government and a Tribal Federally Qualified Health Provider (FQHC) in the State of California. Indian Health Council serves ten sovereign tribal nations in the North Inland Region. Tribal FQHC facilities are in a unique position to provide DMC-ODS services to Native Americans living on and off the reservation who need substance use services. Native Americans have a disproportionately higher rate of substance abuse in comparison to other racial and ethnic groups and have historically received less funding and support for these services. This contract will fund DMC-ODS services for approximately 100 individuals each year to include group and individual counseling, case management, and connection to Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) services on-site.

#### **Opioid Treatment Program: El Dorado Clinic**

Over the past several years, El Dorado Clinic leadership has been working to improve community relations, starting with a capital improvement project of their clinic exterior, including upgrading their building façade, upgrading their clinic sign and sidewalk, with all projects completed by July 2021. Additionally, El Dorado leadership and BHS Local Opioid Treatment Authority (LOTA) have been attending monthly community meetings to provide ongoing representation, provide clinic information, and to listen to community concerns and feedback. El Dorado clinic has worked closely with BHS to develop metrics to operationalize SAMHSA guidelines as it relates to San Diego County's specific community needs. El Dorado clinic is the first Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) to fully finalize their metrics and begin data collection.

#### **Medication Assisted Treatment: Assertive Community Treatment Intensive Outreach Needs (ACTION) East**

The ACTION East program provides supportive housing services integrated with serious mental illness (SMI) and substance use disorder (SUD) treatment services for individuals experiencing homelessness in East Region. Action East operates two treatment program tracks: (1) Short-Doyle/Medi-Cal Mental Health Services ACT (MHSA) Full-Service Partnership (FSP) Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) and recovery services; and (2) Drug Medi-Cal certified Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) treatment and recovery services.

ACTION East began offering MAT services in May 2020, adhering to all applicable federal, state, and local guidelines in the administration of FDA-approved medications for SUD, including the utilization of long-acting injectable naltrexone. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21 the program provided 626 MAT services. Along with the successful implementation of MAT services, the program has outreached to Probation and other programs in the system of care to educate their teams on substance use (SU) and MAT services available at ACTION East. The addition of this service has increased care coordination, while supporting clients in remaining connected to care on site.

## **Supported Employment**

### **FY 2020-2024 Five Year Strategic Employment Plan**

Maximizing employment opportunities has been a key goal for BHS and the new Five-Year Strategic Employment Plan (FY 2020-2024) outlines a clear vision for continued expansion of employment opportunities for people with behavioral health issues, including investing in evidence-based and evidence-informed practices that are effective in increasing employment.

This Strategic Employment Plan (Plan) was developed through in-depth consultation with key community, consumer, and business partners, including focus groups and interviews over a three-month period. The Plan provides an overview of the County of San Diego's investments in behavioral health and employment services and the highly prioritized work stemming from the initial Five-Year Strategic Employment Plan which launched the "Work Well" initiative in San Diego. In addition, the Plan provides an overview of the evidence-based best practice of Individualized Placement and Support (IPS) Model of Supported Employment and how it is being implemented locally. As part of the Plan's roadmap, it was crucial to include an analysis of priority and emerging sectors and employment opportunities in San Diego, outlining key opportunities for employment for people living with behavioral health issues. The Plan also identifies gaps that must be addressed and potential resources in achieving these efforts.

The Plan recommends clear goals, objectives, and strategies which form the foundation to maximize employment opportunities and act as key drivers of positive change and greater employment outcomes in the coming years. The goals over the next five years are to:

- Expand access to IPS Model of Supported Employment
- Engage employers as key partners in the "Work Well" initiative
- Enhance data collection and analysis
- Champion peer employment and advocacy to increase peer involvement
- Identify and pursue funding opportunities

FY 2019-20 BHS Program Databook notes 5,016 (13%) individuals connected with mental health programs are competitively employed, this is an increase of 412 individuals from the previous year. In FY 20-21, outpatient clinic level of care demonstrated the strongest increase in active job seekers over the previous year,

- ***Employment Success Story from MHS. Inc Employment Solutions***

*"D is a full-time student and a devoted pet-mother of a rescue pitbull. D searched for employment that met her limited schedule and finding a job where she could bring P was imperative. The lack of opportunities was increasing D's anxiety and major depressive disorder symptoms. As you can imagine this was not an easy task, so off to Job Development we go! We met with the job developer, invited one of D's support members to help us identify employment possibilities that met D's*



*preferences, connected her with a Peer Support Specialist for support, and provided resources on mental health.*

*D decided that becoming a food service delivery driver was a great opportunity for her as it would allow her to set her own schedule and have P with her during deliveries (service animals are permitted to accompany drivers). D used some of her savings, obtained a low-interest loan, and purchased a fuel-efficient/Hybrid vehicle. D enjoys her job and her income. Additionally, last month, D decided to make her dream of becoming a model a reality and requested Employment Specialist (ES) support with accomplishing this second career goal. D and her ES worked together to learn about the modeling industry requirements, identifying reputable agencies, preparing for a photoshoot to develop a portfolio, creating social media accounts, and preparing for interviews. We applied to a few agencies and D had a few offers. She is now employed by one agency and reviewing the contract with another one. D is an enthusiastic and determined person who never gave up on her goals and is now reaping the success of her hard work."*

## **Clubhouse Updates**

### **Central Region**

- In the latest Request for Proposals, the Central Region Clubhouses were consolidated from three existing Clubhouses to two. NAMI has been awarded one of the new Central Region Clubhouses, Casa De Centro. A second Clubhouse in Central Region, located in Downtown, is currently in the procurement process. In all, Central Region will have a total of four Clubhouses for members of the community, with no reduction in members served. The new Clubhouses will increase the number of members served annually, from 832 members served annually by the current programs to 1150 members served annually in the new contracts. Virtual and in-person services will accommodate the new increase in members.

### **South Region**

- The Clubhouses in the South Region were procured to support the implementation of the Clubhouse International Accreditation model. This model is evidence based and is anticipated to improve member outcomes and quality of Clubhouse services. The South Region Clubhouses were consolidated from two to one in the region, though it is expected that County-wide member capacity in Clubhouses will be increased.
  - NAMI has been awarded the contract for South Region. Services at The Plaza Clubhouse are expected to be operational within the next 30 days.

Respectfully submitted,



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